

From: EPA News [noreply@cision.com]
Sent: 10/21/2021 12:26:07 PM
To: Harris, Michael [harris.michael@epa.gov]
Subject: EPA Chicago - Daily Media Report - Thursday, October 21, 2021

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Report Overview:



















Total Clips (20)

Cleanup - Superfund (3)







Grants (2)

Water - Drinking (14)

Water - Surface (1)

Headline	Date	Outlet	Outlet State	
Cleanup - Superfund (3)				
 Gary Seeks to Recoup Losses from Honeywell Cleanup	10/20/2021	Inside Indiana Business with Gerry Dick Online - WTHR-TV		 
 Honeywell prepared to pay \$900,000 to clean Gary Airport pollution	10/20/2021	Times of Northwest Indiana, The	IN	 
 Mayor Mason Shares Plans to Open Up Bids Soon to Clean Up Linden Avenue Eye-Sore	10/20/2021	WHIZ-TV Online		 
Grants (2)				
 EPA grant awarded to develop Toledo region utilities workforce	10/20/2021	TheNBXpress.com	OH	 
 Laketrans deploys Ohio's largest battery-operated electric bus fleet at Wickliffe Transit Center	10/20/2021	News-Herald Online, The	OH	 
Water - Drinking (14)				
 Arbitrator sees 'reasons to believe' former state official fired for Flint water crisis was a 'political scapegoat'	10/20/2021	MLive	MI	 

	Benton Harbor Declares Emergency in Michigan Over High Levels of Lead as Gov. Gretchen Whitmer Visits	10/20/2021	Epoch Times-Chicago Edition Online, The	IL	  
	Benton Harbor declares local state of emergency over lead contamination in drinking water	10/20/2021	WGVU News	MI	  
	Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community	10/20/2021	Daily Dodge	WI	  
	Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community	10/20/2021	WPHM-AM Online	MI	  
	Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community	10/20/2021	KWLM-AM	MN	  
	Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community	10/20/2021	WSJM	MI	  
	Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community - 1330 & 95.5 WFIN	10/20/2021	1330 WFIN	OH	  
	Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community Mix 102.7 WCPZ	10/20/2021	North Coast Journal - WCPZ-FM	OH	  
	Recall bid against mayor cites water crisis	10/20/2021	Detroit News, The	MI	  
	Recall petition targets Benton Harbor mayor over water crisis	10/20/2021	MLive	MI	  
	Senate wants Mich. docs on response to	10/20/2021	Detroit Free Press	MI	  

	Benton Harbor lead contamination					
	State committee seeks records on Benton Harbor water crisis	10/20/2021	Herald-Palladium, The	MI		 
	Benton Harbor officials heading to Lansing	10/19/2021	Herald-Palladium, The	MI		 

Water - Surface (1)

	Harrison County company gets bid to upgrade Scio sewage treatment plant	10/21/2021	WTOV-TV Online	OH		 
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News Headline: Gary Seeks to Recoup Losses from Honeywell Cleanup |  



News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Inside Indiana Business with Gerry Dick Online - WTHR-TV

Outlet State:

News Text: ...disposal plant operating from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says the site...

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News Headline: Honeywell prepared to pay \$900,000 to clean Gary Airport pollution |  



News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Times of Northwest Indiana, The

Outlet State: IN

News Text: ...from 1967 until it closed and abandoned the parcel in 1985. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency determined that plant...

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News Headline: Mayor Mason Shares Plans to Open Up Bids Soon to Clean Up Linden Avenue Eye-Sore |  


News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: WHIZ-TV Online

Outlet State:

News Text: DOWNTOWN ZANESVILLE, Ohio- The former Lear property on Linden avenue across from the Barn is not only an eye-sore but also a strain on the...

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News Headline: EPA grant awarded to develop Toledo region utilities workforce |  


News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: TheNBXpress.com

Outlet State: OH

News Text: TOLEDO – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is awarding nearly \$500,000 to the Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of...

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News Headline: Laketran deploys Ohio's largest battery-operated electric bus fleet at Wickliffe Transit Center | 


News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: News-Herald Online, The

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ...route vehicle charging. Various Federal Transportation Administration and Environmental Protection Agency grant programs...

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News Headline: Arbitrator sees 'reasons to believe' former state official fired for Flint water crisis was a 'political scapegoat' | 


News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: MLive

Outlet State: MI

News Text: ...and Copper Rule in Flint, her failure to work effectively with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and failure to...

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News Headline: Benton Harbor Declares Emergency in Michigan Over High Levels of Lead as Gov. Gretchen Whitmer Visits | 


News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Epoch Times-Chicago Edition Online, The

Outlet State: IL

News Text: Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer visited Benton Harbor in county Berrien on Tuesday where she met with residents and local leaders who have...

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News Headline: Benton Harbor declares local state of emergency over lead contamination in drinking water | 


News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: WGVU News

Outlet State: MI

News Text: ...\$3 million from the Michigan Clean Water plan and \$5.6 million from an Environmental Protection Agency grant. During the...

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News Headline: Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community | 

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Daily Dodge

Outlet State: WI

News Text: ...to a Natural Resources Defense Council petition filed last month to the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of local...

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News Headline: Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community |



News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: WPHM-AM Online

Outlet State: MI

News Text: ...to a Natural Resources Defense Council petition filed last month to the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of local...

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News Headline: Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community |



News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: KWLM-AM

Outlet State: MN

News Text: ...to a Natural Resources Defense Council petition filed last month to the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of local...

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News Headline: Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community |




News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: WSJM

Outlet State: MI

News Text: ...to a Natural Resources Defense Council petition filed last month to the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of local...

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News Headline: Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community - 1330 & 95.5 WFIN | 

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: 1330 WFIN

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ...to a Natural Resources Defense Council petition filed last month to the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of local...


News Headline: Michigan Gov. Whitmer visits Benton Harbor amid water crisis in predominately Black community | Mix 102.7 WCPZ |  

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: North Coast Journal - WCPZ-FM

Outlet State: OH

News Text: ...to a Natural Resources Defense Council petition filed last month to the Environmental Protection Agency on behalf of local...

News Headline: Recall bid against mayor cites water crisis | 

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Detroit News, The

Outlet State: MI

News Text: The Benton Harbor City Commission has proclaimed a state of emergency amid a lead-in-water crisis in which state officials last week promised an "all-hands-on-deck" approach after three straight years of lead safety violations.

The decision was made at Monday night's commission meeting to give the mayor more powers to deal with the crisis in hopes of working more closely with state and federal leaders, officials said.

But on the day Gov. Gretchen Whitmer also came to visit Benton Harbor under criticism her administration had failed to combat the lead crisis, one resident filed a recall petition against Mayor Marcus Muhammad, saying he couldn't be trusted to lead the city because he did not warn residents that the water was unsafe to consume.

"He came out (with concerns) three years later. It's mind-boggling," said Quacy Roberts, 45, who filed the petition in Berrien County. "He really hasn't done nothing about the water situation. It should have been three years earlier."

The commission is the legislative and governing body of the city. The emergency authorizes Muhammad to work full-time to lead the city during the crisis in working with state and federal officials and establishing a community response team to meet once a week.

Muhammad could not be reached for comment about the recall petition. He said earlier at an afternoon news conference with some city leaders that Whitmer came to Benton Harbor "because she wanted to listen and she wanted to learn.

"This gives the city of Benton Harbor another layer of action, working with the office of city manager, working with clergy ... working directly with state officials," Muhammad said.

The Rev. Edward Pinkney, president of the Benton Harbor Community Water Council activist group and a critic of Muhammad, said that while he supports the emergency declaration, the mayor must go.

"We can't afford three more years of him," Pinkney said. "He's not really doing anything. It's really the governor who's coming in and the only reason she's doing it is because we filed that petition" with the Environmental Protection Agency to secure safe drinking water for Benton Harbor.

"Nothing's being done because of him, nothing. He might like to take the credit for it, but that's not reality," Pinkney added.

Whitmer made a surprise Tuesday visit to Benton Harbor to meet with residents and local leaders, following up on last week's promise by Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrest that the state will find millions of dollars needed to replace lead service lines in 18 months, calling it an "appropriate escalation."

Duane Seats, the mayor pro-tem and commissioner at large, said it was important to give the mayor "full power, full strength" to deal with the crisis.

"We've heard the cry of the people and the cry of the people is that this is an emergency," Seats said. "And we understand it's an emergency, and we do need our mayor to be here full-time."

The recently signed \$70 billion state budget includes a \$10 million appropriation for Benton Harbor lead service line replacement. An executive directive by Whitmer's office will continue the delivery of bottled water, health care and other services for Benton Harbor residents.

In a statement, Whitmer called on the Republican-run state Legislature "to fully fund lead service line replacement" with an additional \$11.4 million to meet the deadline of 18 months.

"Every Michigander deserves safe drinking water," Whitmer said. "Today, I visited Benton Harbor to hear from community leaders doing the work on the ground and residents living through water challenges every day. Our work will build on the executive directive I signed last week to pursue an all-hands-on-deck approach to protect access to safe drinking water right now and make lasting investments in water infrastructure.

"I cannot imagine the stress that moms and dads in Benton Harbor are under as they emerge from a pandemic, work hard to put food on the table, pay the bills, and face a threat to the health of their children. That's why we will not rest until every parent feels confident to give their kid a glass of water knowing that it is safe."

One Republican legislative leader last week indicated support for directing more aid toward replacing Benton Harbor's lead pipes while criticizing two years of Whitmer administration inaction.

"Lead line replacement is a long-term solution that absolutely must be achieved," said Abby Mitch, a spokeswoman for Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey, citing a Senate GOP plan for spending \$600 million in federal dollars on statewide lead line replacement compared with a \$200 million Whitmer plan.

"The promise of long-term solutions from the governor's office should not be allowed to distract from the absolute failure of that office to protect the families in Benton Harbor," Mitch added.

State officials have been under fire for not warning residents that the water was unsafe and that the corrosion control treatments were not working. But officials from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy said they are seeing results now, an assertion environmentalists and water experts say is misleading.

The chairman of the Michigan Senate Oversight Committee, Sen. Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan, has asked Whitmer's administration to produce a lengthy list of documents on its handling of elevated lead levels in Benton Harbor's drinking water.

The request for records from the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) came Monday, according to a letter obtained by The Detroit News. It's an initial signal the GOP-controlled Legislature plans to probe the water crisis in the southwest Michigan city of about 9,615 residents.

Meanwhile, Pinkney said the declaration is an important decision to help bring attention and more money to the city.

Pinkney said Tuesday the state's promise to replace the pipes in 18 months instead of an original five-year plan "is good but we want it done a little bit faster."


"To make it even more important, this will say that there's an urgent matter here," Pinkney said. "And we do have a problem. I've been trying to get the mayor to admit we have a problem. And now this tells the whole world that now the city of Benton Harbor has a real problem and we're going to do everything we can to resolve this problem."

Residents including Pinkney's group and national and state environmental organizations are seeking federal intervention in the impoverished Michigan city. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 5 is reviewing the petition. It follows three consecutive years of lead-in-water results that have exceeded state and federal action levels.

lfleming@detroitnews.com

Staff Writer Craig Mauger contributed.

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News Headline: Recall petition targets Benton Harbor mayor over water crisis | 

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: MLive

Outlet State: MI

News Text: ...one point. The escalating response follows a petition filed with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Sept. 20 by a...

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News Headline: Senate wants Mich. docs on response to Benton Harbor lead contamination | 

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Detroit Free Press

Outlet State: MI

News Text: The Senate Oversight Committee is requesting a trove of documents from the state government to review its response to the long-standing lead contamination of water in Benton Harbor.

Committee Chairman Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan, confirmed the existence of the investigation and the need for documents from the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy during a phone interview Tuesday morning.

"People in the state deserve to have answers about what happened, and we want to be diligent in that responsibility that the Legislature has, to have oversight over the departments," McBroom said.

While several Michigan departments have ramped up their responses recently to the crisis in Benton Harbor, documents from environmental and community organizations indicate unsafe levels of lead in drinking water dating to at least 2018. Experts believe the lead levels are due to old, corroding lead pipes, the same cause of the Flint water crisis first recognized in 2014.

"Since high levels of lead were first discovered in Benton Harbor's drinking water, both Benton Harbor and EGLE have failed to address this public health crisis with the urgency it requires," wrote environmental and community activists in a September petition asking the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to intervene in the crisis.

"Further, both have failed to follow key requirements of the federal and Michigan lead and copper rule that were triggered upon the initial exceedance of the lead action level and meant to minimize lead contamination as soon as possible."

Residents are urged to use bottled water for drinking, cooking, baby formula and more. The state health department has distributed nearly 50,000 cases of water recently to the city's roughly 10,000 residents.

Gov. Gretchen Whitmer announced Tuesday she visited in the morning with Benton Harbor residents in the community, a trip she did not publicize before taking. She went to the southwest Michigan city to highlight an executive directive she recently signed and roughly \$20 million allocated to replace all of Benton Harbor's lead pipes within 18 months, a substantially shorter time frame than previously promised.

"Today, I visited Benton Harbor to hear from community leaders doing the work on the ground and residents living through water challenges every day," Whitmer said in a news release.

"I called on the Legislature to fully fund lead service line replacement with an additional \$11.4 million investment, helping us meet our expedited timeline to replace 100% of lead service lines in 18 months. Our work will build on the executive directive I signed last week to pursue an all-hands-on-deck approach to protect access to safe drinking water right now and make lasting investments in water infrastructure."

State senators are set to take up a bill on Wednesday that would allocate hundreds of millions in federal dollars toward improving water infrastructure.

In a letter McBroom sent to EGLE Director Liesl Eichler Clark on Tuesday, he requests a large trove of internal communications and other documents pertaining to lead levels and water testing. He also asks for communications between EGLE and Whitmer's office about Benton Harbor's crisis dating to January 2019.

"The documents requested herein will help us learn and understand how the department established, implemented, and executed policies and initiatives to address the water crisis in Benton Harbor over the past three years," McBroom states in the letter.

"One of the department's vital responsibilities is to ensure the safety and well-being of Michigan's environment and the residents that reside in it, and a thorough review of the Department's response to this tragedy is necessary and will help strengthen and preserve the Department's effectiveness moving forward."

EGLE Communications Manager Hugh McDiarmid, Jr. said the department received McBroom's letter and intends to comply with the request.

"EGLE looks forward to showing our work regarding the activities that the committee is requesting, including how Benton Harbor officials and residents were informed of drinking water lead exceedances," McDiarmid said in a statement.

"EGLE will also illustrate the consistent and ongoing technical support the state continues to extend the city and its public water supply to establish effective corrosion control, reduce lead levels in drinking water, and invest in improving their water system's infrastructure."


McBroom also served on a special House committee established to respond to the Flint crisis while a member of the lower legislative chamber. He said Tuesday perhaps the biggest takeaway from that review was the need to ensure departments are listening to constituents and taking immediate action to address legitimate concerns.

"For the citizen to be able to cut through the bureaucracy and get the reality of what they're seeing through to the right official was shown to be really difficult in Flint. If that is the case here - which, we don't know yet - but if that is the case here ... we need more opportunity for the citizens to make sure their voices are getting heard, especially when it is a serious health issue that the government ought to be overseeing in the first place," McBroom said.

"If that's the case here, then perhaps we'll be able to pursue more opportunity for the citizens to get their needs heard."

McBroom asked Clark to provide all of the communications and related documents within 10 days. In reality, he said he anticipates it will take at least two months for his committee to obtain and review the requested information.

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News Headline: State committee seeks records on Benton Harbor water crisis | 

News Date: 10/20/2021

Outlet Full Name: Herald-Palladium, The

Outlet State: MI

News Text: BENTON HARBOR — The Michigan Senate Oversight Committee has asked the state to turn over a list of documents on its response to the elevated lead levels in Benton Harbor's drinking water.

Committee Chair Ed McBroom, R-Vulcan, requested records Monday from the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy, according to a letter obtained by The Detroit News.

McBroom is seeking correspondence among officials on the use of corrosion controls in Benton Harbor's water, on testing of the city's water and on the elevated lead levels. The chairman is targeting communications that occurred between Jan. 1, 2019, when Gov. Gretchen Whitmer took office, and Oct. 15, 2021.

"The documents requested herein will help us learn and understand how the department established, implemented

and executed policies and initiatives to address the water crisis in Benton Harbor over the past three years," McBroom's letter stated.

In the letter, the chairman asked the department to provide the requested documents and information within 10 days.

McBroom wrote that "a thorough review of the department's response to this tragedy is necessary and will help strengthen and preserve the department's effectiveness moving forward."

EGLE Communications Manager Hugh McDiarmid Jr. told several media outlets Tuesday the department received McBroom's letter and intends to comply with the request.

A hectic month

Elevated lead levels were first detected in Benton Harbor in 2018 during routine testing.

However, the state urged Benton Harbor residents to use bottled water for drinking, cooking and baby formula on Oct. 6. The order came nearly a month after more than 20 organizations filed a petition to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for emergency action under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act.

As of Monday, the state says it has delivered more than 47,000 cases of free bottled water to Benton Harbor. This week, Meals on Wheels began delivering water.


On Tuesday morning, Whitmer met privately with city officials and community leaders in Benton Harbor, where she called on the state Legislature to help fund lead line replacements with a \$11.4 million appropriation in unused American Rescue Plan funding.

The media was not informed about Tuesday's community meeting beforehand. However, Whitmer's office issued a news release afterward.

"Today, I visited Benton Harbor to hear from community leaders doing the work on the ground and residents living through water challenges every day," Whitmer said in the release.

Last week, Whitmer's office pledged to remove all of the city's lead service lines in 18 months "by April 2023" and continue bottled water delivery as long as it remains necessary. The cost to remove the lines is estimated at \$30 million.

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News Headline: Benton Harbor officials heading to Lansing | 

News Date: 10/19/2021

Outlet Full Name: Herald-Palladium, The

Outlet State: MI

News Text: BENTON HARBOR "Benton Harbor Mayor Marcus Muhammad laid out his plans Tuesday now that city commissioners declared a local state of emergency in the city.

According to the city's charter, Muhammad told the public and media members at a news conference that during declarations of emergency, the mayor is considered the "presiding officer and executive head" of the city.

"In times of public danger or emergency, he may with the consent of the commission take command of the police and such other departments and subordinates of the city as deemed necessary by the commission and maintain order and enforce laws," Muhammad read from a prepared statement.

Muhammad also revealed city officials are traveling to Lansing on Thursday to speak with the state House Oversight Committee, which meets at 10:30 a.m.

"We will be part of the discussion as it relates to clean and safe drinking water in the city of Benton Harbor," he said.

It was a busy day for city officials, as Gov. Gretchen Whitmer met Tuesday with local leaders in Benton Harbor to

reiterate her goal of replacing all of the city's lead service lines within 18 months.

"She had an opportunity to engage with the community so she can, as stated in her executive directive, employ all resources, agencies from the state of Michigan to help resolve the water crisis in the city of Benton Harbor," Muhammad said during the news conference at city hall.

The media was not notified of the governor's private meeting with local leaders. Whitmer's signing of the executive directive was announced last week by Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist II when he visited the city.

Before Whitmer signed the executive directive, city officials estimated it would take up to 20 years to replace all of the lead service lines in the city, due to financial constraints.

In the state's recently signed 2022 budget, the city is receiving \$10 million to help replace the lead service lines, with another \$10 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan being worked on. Muhammad said it is estimated to cost \$30 million to replace all of the city's lead service lines.

Work is expected to start in November to replace 100 lead service lines with the almost \$5.6 million received from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last fall.

Muhammad said Tuesday that he intends to work with commissioners and state officials to help replace the lead service lines that connect houses to the city's main water pipes at an accelerated rate. He said he will "encourage and assist homeowners in Benton Harbor to replace lead pipes in their homes."

Ad hoc committee

At Tuesday's news conference, Muhammad said an ad hoc community response team (CRT) is being formed to keep residents informed about what is being done to remove lead from the city's drinking water.

He said the CRT, chaired by Benton Harbor resident Princella Tobias, will meet once a week.

"We'll be engaging the community as a whole (in a) door-to-door campaign, education campaign, where we're visiting senior citizen homes, public housing, residential homes and covering all bases ... to inform residents as it relates to the issue of lead, where we are at in the process of solving the issue," he said.

After the news conference, Tobias said the weekly meetings will be open to the public, with details to be announced soon.

Benton Harbor has been under a state advisory for having higher-than-acceptable levels of lead in some of its drinking water since October 2018, when it was announced that eight out of 30 homes sampled over the summer had lead levels above the action level of 15 parts per billion (ppb), with the 90th percentile being at 22 ppb for lead.


Since then, the city has been required to test the lead in its drinking water in sample homes every six months.

The state has been providing free water filters and replacement cartridges to residents through the Berrien County Health Department for almost three years. But last week, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Director Elizabeth Hertel told The Herald-Palladium that they are unsure if the filters have been adequately filtering out the lead. The state is currently testing the validity of the water filters.

Earlier this week, the state started providing 20 semi-trucks carrying 35,000 cases of free bottled water to the city on a weekly basis.

State officials have recommended residents use bottled water for drinking, brushing teeth, cooking and mixing with baby formula until the lead service lines are replaced.

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News Headline: Harrison County company gets bid to upgrade Scio sewage treatment plant | 

News Date: 10/21/2021

Outlet Full Name: WTOV-TV Online

Outlet State: OH

News Text: HARRISON COUNTY, Ohio - More than half a million dollars is coming to Scio to upgrade the sewage treatment plant. Border Patrol of...

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